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## **Nature, love inspires Grawemeyer Award-winning piece**

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – “Spheres,” a six-movement work for orchestra by German composer York Hoeller, has earned the 2010 University of Louisville Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition.

The piece, chosen from among 136 entries worldwide, was performed for the first time in 2008 by the West German Broadcasting Corp.’s symphony orchestra in Cologne, Germany.

“The work grips you viscerally from the first bars and never lets up,” said Marc Satterwhite, a UofL music professor who directs the award.

The 40-minute, six-movement piece was inspired by literature, music of the past and the elements of air, water, earth and fire from Greek philosophy, Satterwhite said. Hoeller, who spent five years composing the work, dedicated the last movement “with love and gratitude” to his wife, Ursula, who died in 2006.

“The piece is magnificently scored, using a large orchestra to generate colors ranging from the most delicate to the most overwhelming,” Satterwhite said.

Hoeller, professor emeritus of music composition at the Cologne University of Music, is known for fusing together live and electronic sounds in his works. His compositions often incorporate references to romanticism and French-influenced orchestration along with modernist techniques.

“Spheres” is scheduled to be commercially released on CD in April by NEOS, a German company specializing in contemporary music recordings.

Five Grawemeyer Awards are presented annually for outstanding works in music composition, ideas improving world order, psychology, education and religion. Winners of the other 2010 Grawemeyer Awards also are being announced this week.

For more details, see [www.grawemeyer.org](http://www.grawemeyer.org).

## York Hoeller – Biography

German composer York Hoeller is best known for fusing together live and electronic sounds and incorporating modernist techniques, references to romanticism and French-influenced orchestration into his works.

Born in Cologne in 1944, he was a music professor at Cologne University of Music, where he previously studied composition, electronics, piano and conducting. He studied philosophy and musicology at the University of Cologne.

His pieces for acoustical instruments and electronic media have been performed by major ensembles such as the Chicago Symphony, Ensemble InterContemporain in Paris and the London Sinfonietta and championed by eminent conductors such as Daniel Barenboim and Pierre Boulez.

In the mid-1970s, he began composing at the Paris Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique, an organization devoted to avant garde electro-acoustical music. In 1990, after becoming director of West German Broadcasting Corp.'s electronic studio, he began developing "gestalt composition," a method of writing music that orders one or more musical elements in a fixed series.

Hoeller's 1989 opera, "Der Meister und Margarita," which premiered at the Opera de Paris Palais Garnier, is based on a Russian novel by Mikhail Bulgakov about the devil's visit to the Soviet Union. The same book also is said to have influenced Salman Rushdie's novel "The Satanic Verses" and inspired Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones to write "Sympathy for the Devil."

The six movements of Hoeller's winning piece, "Spheres," ("Sphaeren" in German) are "Song of the Clouds," "Wind Chime," "Layers of Earth," "Rain Canon," "Fireworks" and "Mourning of the Spheres"

Besides earning the Order des Arts et des Lettres from the French Minister of Culture in 1986, Hoeller has been a member of the Academy of Arts in Berlin since 1991. He has received the Bernd Alois Zimmermann Prize from the City of Cologne, the Foerderpreis of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Prize of the International Composers' Forum of UNESCO and the Rolf Liebermann Prize for Opera Composers.

Boosey & Hawkes, an international company specializing in 20<sup>th</sup> century classical music, publishes his work, including his Grawemeyer Award-winning orchestral piece.

The Grawemeyer Award for Music Composition, given since 1985, previously has gone to musical luminaries Witold Lutoslawski, Gyorgy Ligeti and Pierre Boulez.